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SENATE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois Senate are saddened to learn of the death of Mal Bellairs of Woodstock, who passed away on July 12, 2010; and

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WHEREAS, Mal Bellairs was born in Cheyenne, Wyoming, in 1919; he spent his early years on a cattle ranch in Colorado; he later attended the Pasadena Playhouse in California to study acting; and

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WHEREAS, In the late 1930s, Mal Bellairs moved to Chicago; after the attack on Pearl Harbor, he married Josephine Elizabeth Morrissy and enlisted in the United States Army, where he was commissioned as an officer and served in post-war Japan; and

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WHEREAS, After World War II, Mal Bellairs and his wife returned to Chicago, where he began his 50-year legendary broadcasting career and started raising his family; from 1955 to 1969, he worked at WBBM, hosting programs such as Lucky Ladies, Music Wagon, and his annual holiday special, which featured the music of Christmas from around the world; in 1969, he moved the family from Wilmette to Woodstock, where they bought the AM radio station (WIVS) in Crystal Lake, and a few years later the FM station (WXR) in Woodstock; the stations

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1 became a family-run business, with many of the children working
2 alongside their parents and learning the trade; and

3 WHEREAS, After the passing of his beloved first wife, Mal
4 Bellairs was fortunate enough to meet Maria Henslee, fall
5 deeply in love for the second time, marry, and bring their two
6 families together; in 1982, after selling his radio stations,
7 he began to ease out of daily operations, giving he and his
8 wife more time to pursue the things they enjoyed, including
9 their family and friends, cooking, bridge, and travel,
10 especially to Liscrona, their gray stone manor house in
11 Ireland; and

12 WHEREAS, Mal Bellairs will be remembered fondly by his
13 family, friends, and millions of listeners for his recognizable
14 voice, masterful way with words, and his ability to listen to
15 people and let them talk without interrupting; he rarely read
16 from a script and agreed to do commercials only for products he
17 could endorse personally, often testing the products himself or
18 visiting plants and factories to watch them being made; and

19 WHEREAS, In 2009, Mal Bellairs was named a Regional Pioneer
20 Broadcaster by the Illinois Broadcasters' Association; he was
21 also a proud member of the American Federation of Television
22 and Radio Artists; and

1 WHEREAS, Mal Bellairs is survived by his loving wife of 34
2 years, Maria; his children, Keith (Judy) Bellairs, Jerry
3 (Vivian) Bellairs, Pat Bellairs, Kim (Neal) Esterly, Rick
4 (Ellen M.) Bellairs, Jeff (Ellen E.) Bellairs, Chris (Jeannie)
5 Bellairs, Edward (Sally) Henslee, Ann Henslee, and Sue Samet;
6 his grandchildren, David and Bryan Esterly, Edward, Nick, and
7 Maria Samet, Vivian Willis, Mason Bellairs, Brennan and Tessa
8 Jania, Joseph, Matt, Stacie, and Malcolm Bellairs, Nigel and
9 Graham Bellairs, Mallory and Jade Bellairs, Kelly Hallam, Rob
10 Leana, and Shannon Taylor; therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL
12 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we mourn, along with
13 his family and friends, the passing of Mal Bellairs; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
16 presented to the family of Mal Bellairs as an expression of our
17 sympathy.